

How Do Wisconsin's Water Quality Agricultural Rules Work Together?

Water Quality Permitting Program for Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs)*

* livestock or poultry operations with 1,000 animal units or greater

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Mandates a federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitting program for industries, municipal treatment plants and CAFOs to protect water quality. US EPA has delegated the Department of Natural Resources to implement this permit program in Wisconsin.



NR 243

Outlines Wisconsin's requirements for CAFOs based on the federal NPDES permit program as well as state authority to protect groundwater, surface waters and wetlands through the Wisconsin Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (WPDES) permit program.



WPDES Permit Requirements

Requirements in NR 243 and the permits issued under this code are based on several components, including the following:

- NR 151 Performance Standards
- NRCS Technical Standards
- Unique water quality issues associated with CAFOs
- Unique water quality concerns at a given CAFO site
- Public comments on a permit related to water quality

Performance Standards for All Livestock & Poultry Operations in Wisconsin

Performance Standards & Related Rules

NR 151

Identifies general performance standards and manure management prohibitions that all livestock and poultry operations must meet.



ATCP 50

Identifies nutrient management requirements, conservation practices crop and livestock producers may use to comply with NR 151 and the technical standards that specify how the practices must be installed.



NRCS Technical Standards

ATCP 50 references many NRCS technical standards that are developed by workgroups consisting of experts on a given practice.

Example: Nutrient Management

NR 151.07

"Manure, commercial fertilizer and other nutrients shall be applied in conformance with a nutrient management plan."



ATCP 50.78

"The nutrient management practice [must comply] with NRCS technical guide nutrient management standard 590..."



NRCS 590: Nutrient Management

"This standard establishes the minimum acceptable requirements for a plan that addresses the application of plant nutrients associated with organic wastes (manure and organic byproducts), commercial fertilizer, legume crops, and crop residues...."